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LEIPZIG FAIR — BIG TRADE

But British Business Gets Small Share

East-West trade agreements for the exchange of goods valued at hundreds of millions of dollars were concluded at the Leipzig Fair in the German Democratic Republic, which closed on March 8th, but British and American exporters received only a relatively small share of the business.

The foreign trade authorities announced that the German Democratic Republic alone had done business valued at 3,500 million rubles (about 875 million dollars) at the Fair, and other socialist countries exhibiting also did very big trade. British businessmen, politicians and journalists attending the Fair were almost unanimous in their opinion that British merchants and manufacturers could have done very big business too, if they had received proper support from the British Government.

British Labour M. P. Geoffery de Freitas, who attended the fair, queried: "How much longer will the British Government discourage our exporters from trading with East Germany?... The British and American Governments failed to seize a great commercial and political opportunity".

Viscount Hinchingbrooke, Conservative M. P., called on the British Government to recognise the German Democratic Republic.

"RECOGNISE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC"

British M. P.s Call for Realist Policy

In the House of Commons on February 27th, Viscount Hinchingbrooke, Conservative M. P. for South Dorset, demanded that the Government recognise East Germany formally and diplomatically. "We might send a consul to Leipzig" he added.

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The British Government must take steps to encourage British export trade with East Germany, Geoffrey de Freitas, Labour M. P. for Lincoln stated in a letter to the "Times", London, on March 2nd.

Here is the full text of Mr de Freitas' important letter:

"Sir, — Although your Leipzig Correspondent reports criticisms of the West German Government's attitude to the Leipzig Trade Fair he is far politer to Bonn than were the British and American businessmen out there. They accuse the Bonn Government of misleading us about its trade with East Germany in order to obtain commercial advantage. West German exhibitors have taken more space than all the other non-Communist countries put together

"Further, Bonn has concluded a trade agreement with the East Germans which Herr Rau, the East German Trade Minister, told me could only be described as 'official' and similar to his Government's trade agreements with other countries such as Finland and India. How much longer will the British Government discourage our exporters from trading with East Germany? Why must we be more royalist than the king?

"The Leipzig Trade Fair is more than an opportunity to trade. It has become a meeting ground for East and West. Obviously the Foreign Office does not realise its significance. In the dining room of the chief hotel there sat the official delegates from all over Europe and Asia. All except the British and Americans were in civilian clothes. The only official representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States were neither traders nor Civil Servants, but soldiers in uniform. I was told they were there to assert the rights of the occupying forces. They did this with great dignity as they dined at tables bearing the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes. Oddly enough, although Leipzig is in the Russian Zone, I saw few Russian uniforms in the city and none at the hotels where the trade delegations met.

"Although there is a case for retaining our rights as occupying Powers, we would have made a better impression on the Chinese, Viet Namese, Mongolians, &c., if we had sent a real trade delegation. The Communists had a simple explanation: we sent soldiers to the fair because we were interested not in 'peaceful trade' (the slogan of the fair) but merely in the assertion of rights deriving from military conquest. Like all the British and American business men I spoke to, I returned from Leipzig convinced that the British and American Governments had failed to seize a great commercial and political opportunity."

British & American Journalists at Leipzig: See next page

"THE TIMES" AT LEIPZIG

"Last night's opening ceremony reasserted Leipzig's claims to be the showplace of economic progress in the Communist countries and a clearing house for political ideas, ranging from the development of peaceful co-existence to eastern Germany's hankering after international respect.

"The fair has brought exhibitors from 40 countries. All the Communist states are represented, the east Germans showing the greatest volume of goods. Among the newcomers this year are Portugal, Israel and Finland; India for the first time has an official exhibit, and several famous west German firms made a first appearance, including Daimler-Benz and Krupps, whose black and silver stand is in the bizarre company of the nationalised heavy engineering firms from eastern Germany.

"British businessmen are persisting in the quest of trade with the east ... Rolls-Royce have come for the first time on what is described as a voyage of discovery. They are showing diesel engines thought to be especially suitable for heavy lorries on the east German roads, or for earth clearing equipment which the Chinese might well find useful. A party of Chinese officials was visiting the British stand this afternoon. They would find there not only a will to trade but a plausible argument for overcoming possible restrictions. In China, it is felt, a commercial vacuum exists which will eventually be filled by the increasing industrial output of eastern Europe if western firms are unable to compete.

"The first east German five-year plan ended in December; the east Germans, for all the difficulties they make themselves in imposing an alien economic system, with the constant irrelevances of doctrinaire requirements, have managed to bring an undeniable measure of industrial success from their jungle of bureaucracy and ideology. Not to recognise their existence may be a necessary diplomatic fiction. Sheer weight of heavy machinery, however, makes it impossible to minimise their significance in any rational estimate of the German problem."

"The Times", London,
February 27th 1956

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"That west German exhibitors have taken more space (at the Leipzig Fair, ed.) than all other western and non-Communist countries put together is one of the most striking facts of this year's fair ... The refusal of the west to recognise the east German Government has invited the comfortable thought that east German internal affairs can be treated with a somewhat cavalier rejection as well. The lack of much opportunity for travel by independent observers in east Germany has tended to harden this opinion. The unpleasant thought that an alien system, imposed with ruthlessness and apparently more regard for doctrinaire than economic considerations, can eventually bring some results seems to have struck many observers coming to Leipzig for the first time.

"There is always the argument that this city is not typical; that the shops and hotels are filled for the express purpose of stimulating such thoughts, that the food is purposely far better than elsewhere in east Germany, and that a trade fair naturally shows a country at its best. Reliable reports from elsewhere suggest that this theory has its limits ... Nevertheless, at a time when the German problem is beginning to show new complications, the state of affairs in this part of the divided country is as significant as any."

"The Times", London,
February 28th 1956

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(GERMAN REPORT comments: (1) The "Times" correspondent repeatedly alleges that the socialist economy now being built in East Germany is "an alien system". He should note that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the founders of the system of scientific socialism now being built, were both of course Germans. (2) He regrets the "lack of opportunity for travel by independent observers in east Germany". To remedy this he should apply to the Government of the German Democratic Republic for a visa to make a tour of East Germany. His colleague who reported on the Leipzig Trade Fair for the "Times" in 1955 took this step, and made an extended trip, visiting all corners of the Republic.)

AMERICANS GET EYE-FULL AT LEIPZIG FAIR

"East Germany has come a long way since the uprising of June 17th 1953. (The American-inspired putsch against the German Democratic Republic, ed.)

"Since then the economic situation seems to have improved substantially ... These are the most striking impressions one gets in Leipzig, the big, scrubby, bustling Saxon city where the Eastern and Western economic systems meet on common ground at the great international fair that is in its spring session. Independent observers who travel frequently to East Germany and have seen its development in consecutive years since the uprising of 1953 say that the situation in Leipzig is not untypical in East Germany ...

"Pounding pavements is the only way to get an impression of the city and people. The impression one carries away from tramping through the streets of Leipzig leaves one wondering; despite the cold winter blasts the main streets were crowded. The huge railway station, once the biggest in Europe, was bustling with passengers arriving and departing.

"The snack bars on the cold platforms were well filled with sausages, bread and cakes. These snack bars were not designed for foreigners visiting the Leipzig Fair. Their customers were East Germans ... The food stores had good quality foodstuffs, though of limited variety. Butter was short, but clothing, textile and shoe stores were well stocked.

"The overall impression, which the independent observers say is generally valid for the rest of East Germany, is that this may no longer be regarded as a ramshackle state governed by an inept dictatorship. It is rapidly becoming an efficient dictatorship that seems able to handle its economic and political problems."

Meyer S. Handler, "New York Times",
February 28th 1956

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"Heavy equipment exhibited at the Leipzig Fair by the Soviet bloc tends to uphold the view that the Communist world is capable of sustaining an economic offensive against the West. This is the view of reputable experts ... The Communist campaign is based on heavy capital equipment exports.

"There is no longer any inclination on the part of Western visitors to

regard the Soviet bloc exhibits as show pieces manufactured for the purpose of impressing or deluding the West. Recent production reports by the Soviet bloc governments and the arrival of heavy goods in the uncommitted countries would seem to confirm the impression that the products on exhibit are in current use and manufacture. The products include heavy machine tools, electric generators, motors, transformers, telephone switchboards, radio communications, farming machinery, automatic spinning machines, tractors, prime movers, trucks, automobiles, hoisting gear, oil drills and rigs . . .

"In view of the industrialisation progress of the Communist countries the fair exhibits dramatised the ability of the Communist countries to produce industrial equipment and industrial products of the most intricate and costly design."

Meyer S. Handler, "New York Times", February 29th 1956

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"Visitors who were here for the spring opening of the 1956 Fair had this opening day impression: Last year, they said, the displays of the Communist countries seemed to be prepared more for internal political consumption than for export sales. Now, according to the same visitors, there is a mood to sell and buy if the right terms can be agreed upon . . . Eye-catching offerings by East Germany's state-owned industry were a lightweight plastic model automobile with a 22-horse power engine and a 50-mile an hour speed. The chassis was also on display with a station wagon body."

William J. Humphreys, "New York Herald Tribune", February 27th 1956

"LET'S CONFER WITH EAST"

Protestant Clergy Speak Out

One hundred and four Evangelical clergymen in the West German state of Baden-Wuerttemberg have appealed to the West German Government to confer with the Government of the German Democratic Republic on the problems of peace and reunification.

The clergy signed, at the beginning of March, an open letter addressed to all members of the West German Parliament. The letter stated in part:

"In this age of atom-bombs the creation of West German divisions is not only useless, but actually dangerous and fateful . . . Can you answer for this before God and your conscience? . . . We are convinced that Germany should not rearm so long as it is divided, since rearmament deepens this division and makes it permanent . . . The Bonn Government negotiates with the Soviet Union, with Yugoslavia, and with other states. Why can it then not negotiate with the Germans on the other side of the zonal border, and with the Government which in fact exists there? Why is it impossible to find a way to unite the Germans? Does anyone in Bonn really believe that Germany can ever be united without war if the present path is persisted in? . . . The only way to save Germany from destruction is to abandon the policy of strength and to seek a policy of understanding. Can you please use the democratic powers conferred upon you to support such a policy, rather than a mode of government which by its authoritarian methods reminds us of fateful patterns in the past."

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS VOTE AGAINST WEHRMACHT

Twenty Social Democratic members of the West German Parliament ignored orders from their right-wing leaders and voted against the formation of the West German Wehrmacht on March 6th.

The Social Democratic leadership had ordered all Social Democratic members of parliament to vote in favour of a government bill making sweeping changes in the Constitution to enable the Wehrmacht to be established. Twenty members broke party discipline and voted against the bill. which was, however, approved by a large majority.

The constitutional changes make it possible for the West German government to introduce not only conscription, but also compulsory labour service for all West German men. The changes limit the rights of free speech and freedom of association, and cancel the inviolability of the home.

Under the revised constitution the President and Chancellor can declare war without consulting parliament.

FAIR NOTES

The famous Dresden Ihagee Camera Works will export 24,000 Exakta Varex Cameras to the United States as the result of a contract concluded at the Fair. This 35 mm. camera became very popular in the United States last year after it had been the "star" of the Paramount film "Rear Window", in which it was constantly used by the human star, James Stewart.

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In previous years, visitors from the German Democratic Republic inspecting consumer goods on show at the Leipzig Fair have often been disappointed to learn that they were reserved for export only, to earn foreign currency. With steadily increasing production in all branches of industry this situation has been largely overcome, and most of the fine new refrigerators, large-screen television sets, handy home washing machines and hundreds of other products shown at the fair will be available in the shops of the Republic in the near future.

Freighter Launched

Democratic Germany has launched its first 10,000 ton freighter, by far the largest ship ever built in East Germany. The new freighter, which was named "Frieden" (Peace), is scheduled for the far eastern service. Two more freighters of the same series are already on the stocks, and a total of 15 of them are due to be built before 1960.

The new ships, which are fully welded, will have a crew of 56, accomodated in comfortable two-man cabins. The four 2400 h. p. diesel motors and most of the other marine equipment were made by nationally owned factories in the German Democratic Republic.

The shipyards at Warnemuende, where the "Frieden" was built, have been entirely constructed since the Second World War. Before 1945 shipyards in what is now East Germany only built small fishing and coastal vessels.

Unionists Visit East

In the past two years a total of 120,000 West German trade unionists have visited the German Democratic Republic, and have seen on the spot the job of building socialism.

East German Train in Gobi

The railway carriages on the newly-built railway line crossing the Gobi desert in the Mongolian People's Republic were made in the German Democratic Republic.

LEARNING TO BE A FARMER

By Joan Becker

A few weeks ago a friend suggested I might like to go with her and her fourteen-year-old son Peter to see over a nationally owned cattle farm not far from Berlin, where about 40 boys and girls are trained in two-year courses, mainly in cattle rearing and hand and electric milking.

We went with a group who will be leaving primary school this summer and who want to find out whether they would like this kind of work. The boys and girls came from all manner of families — teachers, office workers or shop assistants, and we met a lawyer there who was visiting his son. Peter's mother comes of a family of business people and she is herself a psychologist, but she would like at least one practical person in the family, and Peter likes the idea of working in the country, too.

We were met by an open truck at the station and drove the ten kilometres to the farm over winding country lanes, pale winter sun shining on the snow and on the white bark of silver birches. It was bitterly cold, but it was perhaps a good idea, after all, for our future dairy experts to see the hard side of farm life as well.

We drove past the long cattle sheds to the apprentices' hostel first — a big white house, newly built and centrally heated, with new white porcelain radiators. First we were shown into the common room upstairs, warm and cheery with chintz curtains and light oak furnishings, where the farm manager, the milking instructor, who is also in charge of training, an animal husbandry man and a stock-breeder, and Frau Lorentz, the pleasant, capable-looking young hostel matron, told us about the school time-table, hostel rules and regulations and other interesting things.

The boys have their bedrooms on one floor and the girls on another, but they eat, study and work together. Regulations are much the same as in an ordinary co-educational school — the young people work in groups and they elect a committee which helps run the hostel. There is a senior on duty who wakes the others in the morning and is responsible for general tidiness and punctuality. He is on duty for a fortnight, for this fits in with the fortnightly day at home which all apprentices get.

They have to be up very early, of course, since work in the cow sheds begins at six, and for the older ones (over 16) even earlier in the summer, but the day is so divided that the legal working hours are not exceeded — seven hours for the 14—16 year-olds, 7½ hours for the 16—18 year-olds and 8 hours for those over eighteen.

The morning spell lasts from 6 to 10 o'clock, then comes second breakfast and study until mid-day dinner at 12.30, followed by afternoon rest from 1 to 2.30 for all, without exception. Those who are not sleepy must read or play quietly so as not to disturb the others. Older apprentices have a short mid-day work spell, but the 14 to 16 year-olds only go on again for the evening feeding and milking. In the afternoons there is time for study circles and sports and they have coffee at 4 o'clock. Supper is at seven and then the young people are free to do what they like until lights out at 9 pm on week-days and 10 on Saturdays and Sundays. No reading in bed is allowed, even if, as Frau Lorentz said with a smile, she has to cut off the light.

All apprentices have two days' schooling a week, with six hours' lessons a day, in the stock-breeders' apprentice school, where they learn something of the theory on which their practical work is based, so that if they want to go on studying after their apprenticeship, they know enough at the end of two years to go on to technical school for the three-year courses in animal husbandry, veterinary science, agronomy or dairying. The best graduates from these technical schools can then go on to agricultural colleges to take university degrees.

Instructor Becker spoke in a wonderfully friendly way to the young people, I thought. He told them that it was not an easy life, for they would have to get used to early rising and would not be able to skimp on their work. But there would be many compensations, for they would be working with living creatures and they would soon get to know and love them. He warned parents from the start only to let children come who are really in the pink of health and who actually feel drawn to working with animals. And he said quite firmly that he would not accept anybody who had to wear spectacles for work. "Fishing for your spectacles in a pail of milk," he said with a twinkle, "wouldn't be quite the thing!"

All prospective apprentices have to pass a special medical examination, in any case, and there are regular quarterly medical examinations too. Both he and the farm manager agreed that they prefer working with boys and girls who come to them after completing middle school, for 16 year-olds are not only physically better able for the work; they are also more responsible and do not have to be reminded so often about unpleasant duties.

Parents asked all sorts of questions about food, washing, time for reading and homework, pay, off-duty recreations and so on. Working clothes — overalls and rubber boots — are supplied and the overalls laundered by the school, but the children must bring the rest with them and take their washing home with them each fortnight. One mother thought this was too long to have dirty washing accumulating, but Frau Lorentz remarked that mothers spoil their children nowadays; she had no objection to their washing underclothing in the hostel, for there is constant hot water and plenty of time for little jobs of this kind.

Apprentices' pay starts at 75 marks and rises half-yearly to 105 marks a month, from which 30% is deducted for food and lodging, but in any case never more than 30 marks a month.

Food is plain but ample for growing teenagers working hard.

There are many interesting things to do in off-duty time; various study circles, including nature study and literature, and folk dance, singing and guitar groups.

The legal annual holidays — 21 days for those up to 16, 18 days for those up to 18 and 14 days for the 18 year-olds and over — have to be planned so that not too many apprentices are away at one time. The same applies to the fortnightly day at home, for the animals have to be cared for and milking done regularly all the time.

Then the parents went over the hostel and looked into every corner. I took a hasty look into the cheerful bedrooms, study, library, modern tiled kitchen and two dining-rooms for the staff and for the apprentices, and glanced into the big hall which is also equipped as a cinema, so that the young people can see films without walking the rather long distance to the nearest public cinema. Then I went down to the cattle farm with Instructor Becker, to see over a hundred milking cows, about seventy

beef cattle and thirty calves, twenty-two of them born since Christmas.

The cows are all Friesians, which is the best breed for this part of the country, both for milk and for beef, but the stock is not yet as good as it should be. All animal stock was decimated during the war and dairy farms simply collected what stock they could get hold of after 1945. And in any case, Herr Becker told me, he is not interested in fancy pedigree stock for such a training farm as this, because beginners are not the right people to handle it. He wants to build up a good sturdy medium quality herd to produce healthy calves and give a steady milk yield.

Young apprentices who came to the farm last September were hand-milking. They seemed to be doing all right, too. Electric milking comes later, for they have to learn how to start the milk and then milk the cows dry after electric milking, to avoid udder trouble.

The milk from this farm all goes to the creameries for butter and cheese. It is put into refrigerators here, but nothing further is done to it, for as Herr Becker said, beginners ought not to have the responsibility of supplying fresh drinking milk. Only qualified milkers and dairymen work on the farms which supply fresh milk.

The jolliest part of my visit was to the calves' shed, where the youngest were getting their full-cream milk warm from the cow. Two girls and a boy were on the job. They bring the milk over from the milking sheds in a rubber-wheeled cart, and all manure and fodder is brought in on trolleys on lines, so that there is none of the old back-breaking pail carrying.

There is electric light everywhere and one Soviet electric milker is in action and a Belgian one on the way.

I also saw several litters of pigs and there are sheep, too, though I did not have time to see them. Apprentices also learn something of pig and sheep-rearing and a few of them specialise in these lines.

We went out through the fodder barn, with its sharp stench of mixed fodder, and looked at the big new potato steamer, which steams four times as many potatoes at a time as the old one.

Things did not look as clean as they do in good weather, but with the temperature at 20° C. below zero it had been impossible to swill down for days.

On the way back to the hostel, only five minutes' walk away, Herr Becker told me how he came to be working here. He was evacuated from Pomerania at the end of the war and resettled on a small peasant holding under the Land Reform, but as he was a trained dairyman he did not like working in such a small way, so he took a job as stock man on a big dairy farm, where he stayed nine years. But his health is not as good as it was, so he decided to come as instructor to the apprentices' school, for, as he said, his voice was still in order and he could do a good job training new dairy workers.

We passed by the skating rink in front of the hostel, took a look at the recently built changing rooms in a separate building behind the hostel, and another quick look at the tiled bath house with its twelve shower-bath cubicles, and then it was time to climb into the truck and drive back to the station.

Judging by their conversation, I think most of the boys and girls had already made up their minds to come here next September, and it did not sound as if they were afraid of a little hard work.

You Ask — We Answer

ABOUT ARTISTS & SCULPTORS

"I am a sculptor. This makes me interested to know how sculptors are commissioned and paid in the German Democratic Republic... How do their conditions compare with those of a professor in a university, in position and payment? Is the material provided and the work on it then paid for? Do sculptors lecture in schools once, twice or every day of the working week?"

E. L., Angus, Scotland

We called on a sculptor to get the answers to this one, and as he is also chairman of a local section of the Artists' Association and a teacher in the Berlin College of Plastic and Applied Arts in Weissensee, he was able to give us a detailed answer, about sculptors and artists in general.

Like many other recognised artists, he teaches three days a week at the College of Art, for which he receives a basic salary of 1,000 marks a month, and during the last few months he has also completed a six-foot statue for a group which now stands on one of the new buildings in the Stalin Allee. The five sculptors working on the group were commissioned by a board which included the architect of the building, a sculptor member of the central committee of the Academy of Arts and a member of the commission which administers the cultural fund raised by a small levy on theatre and cinema tickets.

The commission viewed the sculptors' experimental models, and if these had not been thought suitable the artists would have received a sum of money to cover their expenses. Our sculptor, for instance, would have received 1,500 marks of the 9,000 marks which he was to receive for the statue completed in plaster-of-Paris.

A sculptor can of course work direct in stone for exhibition if he wishes, but he does not often do this, as it is expensive and he cannot tell beforehand whether he can sell his work.

Materials are bought and paid for by artists, generally through the Artists' Association at moderate prices. Bronze, however, can only be bought with a permit based on the sculptor's commission, since the supply is limited.

There are three colleges of plastic and applied arts — in Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden. In Dresden emphasis is on painting, sculpture and illustrating, in Leipzig graphic arts come first, and in Berlin, where our sculptor teaches, there are courses in sculpture, painting, architecture, dress-designing, textile design, industrial art and ceramics. There is also an Institute of Industrial Art in Halle — Giebichenstein Castle, which works on an arts and crafts basis.

Matriculation from high school or graduation from a technical art school are required for entry to these three art schools, and the training is very thorough; teachers and professors have the same standing and receive pay equivalent to that of professors and lecturers in universities.

Apprentices who have successfully completed their training as stone masons, wrought-iron smiths, pottery workers etc. are eligible to enter the technical art schools for two-year courses, so that the most talented of them come to the art colleges at about the same age — eighteen or nineteen — as students from the high schools. Former apprentices often have a better grounding than high school graduates, too, for there is still a shortage of art teachers in the

schools, and more attention must be paid to this subject in future.

Apart from a very few whose parents earn over-average incomes, all students in technical art schools and in the art colleges receive stipends averaging about 200 marks a month.

It is basic government policy to encourage art and artists; there is a department of plastic and applied arts in the Ministry of Culture, and the Academy of Arts, which has as its members outstanding representatives of all branches of art, is to some extent the guiding body.

The Artists' Association, with its 600 members in Berlin and about 3,000 in the Republic, has branches in all important centres. It looks after the material interest of its members — for instance, that free-lance artists are included in the social insurance service on the same basis as workers and office employees, and that artists receive cheap coal for their studios, like doctors and lawyers, etc.

But an extremely important task of the Association is to bring art to the people. Our sculptor told us how the Pankow section in North Berlin goes about this. It organises monthly exhibitions in a Pankow clubhouse of works mostly by Pankow artists, who design their own posters and invitations, but there have been good exhibitions of foreign and West German works too.

The Association also goes to the factories; it put on five or six exhibitions of about 60 paintings and sculptures in three Berlin factories last year and the artists discussed their works with factory workers. The trade union committees bought works which appealed to them for their clubrooms, using money from their own cultural funds.

The Pankow section has also started something new in the schools, partly to help young artists and partly to improve art work in the schools. Pictures and busts for schools were usually bought and presented to the schools by various bodies without much regard for the preferences of the children; but last year a young woman graphic artist took a number of her wood-cuts and sketches to a Pankow school and showed them to the children herself, so that they could choose what they liked. The pictures they chose were paid for from a special fund administered by the city education administration.

Prices are kept low enough for ordinary people to buy; wood-cuts, for instance, sell at 20 to 30 marks, the price of 10 or 15 packages of cigarettes.

There are relatively few art galleries in the Republic, for the tendency is to bring art to the people through local exhibitions and travelling exhibitions which bring everything they need to set up in the village hall or school. The Potsdam section of the Association showed paintings, sculptures and graphic art works in the mining centres of Guben, Hoyerswerda and Senftenberg late in 1955, and about a fifth of the population went to see them.

In a country where so much new building is going on and 2 per cent of building funds for all public buildings are for decoration, there are many opportunities for artists to place their work. A number of Dresden artists, for instance, have just completed a fresco on the walls of one of the Dresden University Workers' and Peasants' Faculty hostels which provoked a heated — and partly disapproving—discussion.

The works of the well-known wrought-iron smith, Fritz Kuehn, and his assistants can be seen on hundreds of new buildings in Berlin, and the huge relief now decorating the entrance to the Art College in Weissensee was done by a 25-year-old sculptor, Juergen von Woyski, for his diploma. He is one of two gifted brothers who won scholarships first to the Giebichenstein Institute of Industrial Art and then to the Weissensee College of Art. He has now been commissioned to help decorate the buildings in the new town for the workers of the "Black Pump" soft coal mining enterprise in Hoyerswerda.

ALL-GERMAN COURT SHOULD TRY CRIMINALS

An All-German Court should be constituted to try the war criminals and mass murderers who today occupy leading positions in the West German administration.

This proposal was made on March 1st by Dr Hans Loch, Deputy Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic and Chairman of the Committee for German Unity. Dr Loch was addressing an international press conference in Berlin. He stated:

"The murderers are amongst us. Some of the main participants in the bloody period of Hitlerite domination occupy key positions in the West German Federal Republic.

"Their aims are the same as those they pursued under Hitler — the 'liberation and new order in Europe'. This is the decisive danger to peace, democracy and reunification. The unregenerate supporters and organisers of militarism, anti-Semitism and nazism, such as Globke, Braeutigam, Oberlaender, Lenz, Schroeder, Forschbach, Kraft, Zenker, Heusinger etc., must be finally removed from power in Germany.

"For this purpose we propose the formation of an All-German Investigation Commission, which should deal with nazi and anti-Semitic activity in the West German Federal Republic. This Commission should be composed of parliamentarians from both parts of Germany, veterans of the resistance movement, representatives of the Jewish Community, and leading democratic jurists.

"We demand that Globke and Braeutigam, the murderers of the Jews, should be immediately arrested and tried by an All-German Court to be established for this purpose.

"We appeal to the entire German people to support this demand. The name of Germany and the future of Germany are at stake. If our national community is not cleansed of these nazi and militarist elements, the reunification of Germany in peace and liberty is impossible."

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THREE WOMEN IN DEMOCRATIC BERLIN

By Margot Pfannstiel

Let me tell you about three women who work in the Electrical Apparatus Works in East Berlin. One thing they have in common: when they applied for work here some years ago, they did not do so because they felt drawn to the work or because they felt they were needed for reconstruction work. They did it mainly because they wanted to earn money.

Charlotte Blauert, 34 years old, is a typical hearty Berliner who is never at a loss for a quick answer, but she is also no fool. She worked herself up to brigade leader, but still felt that she ought to learn more, especially when everyone was talking about mechanisation. The factory women's committee advised her to take an eighteen months' training course as mechanic.

A year and a half was a long time, though. She would have to start from the very beginning again and she would get less money during training. This would make a big difference to her, especially as she was alone since her divorce. But this was what really decided Charlotte to take the plunge. She wanted to be absolutely independent and never again have to rely on a man, even if she did find someone she would like to marry again.

Forty men and women started the course with her, but only twelve of them stuck it out to the end. Charlotte was one of these; she learnt easily and got more confidence in herself, and she also had the feeling that the factory really needed her and valued her work.

Charlotte will be taking her final test as mechanic in May, and she is quite certain to pass it. So will Vera Frisch, who has sat next to her throughout the course.

Vera is 24, small, blonde and quick, with a little turned-up nose and quizzical eyes. She married young — an engineer who works in the same factory. They met in a dance group where she taught dancing and he played the accompaniment. At that time she was a stamper in the department where measuring instruments are mounted. She joined the mechanics' course partly because she is ambitious, and partly because she wanted to catch up with her husband. Besides, she would earn more as a mechanic, and she needed the money to fulfil her own personal plan.

You see, the Frisch family has its own Five Year Plan, which includes a grand piano (her music-loving husband's dream), a big radio and a number of other good things.

And when she has carried out her plan? "Then I shall stop working", says Vera, as if this were a foregone conclusion, "and we shall move into my husband's family's house and make ourselves really comfortable. I shall learn to play another instrument, so that we can have our own little concerts at home in the evenings. And then I shall spend a lot of time with my cactus plants."

Of course there is nothing peculiar about a young woman wanting to settle down in a comfortable home, but still it is not quite the thing. Will you really be satisfied with your home and your cacti, Vera? And aren't you being a little selfish? After all, your mechanic's training has cost quite a bit of money. But she has five years to think it over; perhaps she will change her mind about giving up her work altogether.

Johanna Wadepol, who is forty, actually only wanted to work for a year. She and her husband had decided that her year's wages would be enough to buy the things they wanted. But she has now been working for five years and wouldn't even think of giving up her job. She is now a senior dispatcher in the Treptow works and is starting a course in factory management.

When he heard about this, her husband banged his fist down on the table. "Who put that idea into your head?" he shouted. He was already fed up with his wife's pushing and independence. Hanna had been a dear, shy little thing before; he had kept all his work troubles from her, because as he said, she wouldn't understand them anyway. And now she was poking her nose into everything. She belonged to the Democratic Women's Federation and the factory women's committee and even earned more money than he.

That was what really hurt most; she earned more money.

"You can take training too", said Hanna, "you need not be an assistant mechanic all your life."

"It's quite enough to have one crazy person in the family", he muttered. "I shall stay the way I am."

But then their fourteen-year-old daughter went "crazy" too. She came home one day and said she wanted to study German literature, and her mother was all for it.

In 1954 Hanna won a medal "For Exceptionally Good Work". Her husband was a little proud of her, but he took good care not to show it.

All this worried Hanna. She had had such a happy married life and everything could be the same as before if she only gave up working. But had her married life been so good after all? Her husband had always made her feel that he was the boss and she had been dependent on him for every penny... She couldn't go back to that. Her work had become necessary to her and she realised this fully when she was ill for a month.

If only her husband had a bit more ambition; he was not stupid, she thought, and he could really do much more.

A few days ago Hanna met the foreman of her husband's department. "Fine that your husband has joined", he said.

"Joined what?" asked Hanna.

"Why, the training course."

"But what training course?"

The foreman shook his head. People are so absent-minded nowadays. "The training course for foreman mechanics, of course."

(Abridged from the "Wochenpost", Berlin, March 3rd 1956)

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BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

In the past few days letters have been pouring into our office here in an almost embarrassing stream, with suggestions on how to improve GERMAN REPORT. We shall publish a selection from these letters in an early number, and I hope too that we shall be able to put some of the suggestions into effect.

But I am afraid that some of the suggestions are out of the question: as for instance the idea that we should publish the words and music of a new song in each issue.

While most correspondents agree, by and large, with the selection of news and features which we give in the paper, there is a significant minority which says in effect: "Don't tell us any more about war criminals and nazis in West Germany; we know all about that already; use your space instead to tell us more about the positive features of peaceful reconstruction in the German Democratic Republic."

Now this is a suggestion which I am not inclined to follow. And the reason is very simple.

Threat

The presence of great numbers of leading nazis and war criminals in important positions in the West German administration today is not simply a scandal: it is a very real and growing threat to European peace. If they are not stopped, then the day will come in the not far distant future when there will be no peaceful reconstruction to report on, either in the German Democratic Republic or anywhere else, for these nazis (it is not even necessary to call them neonazis) will have plunged the world into war.

When people brush off the danger, I cannot help recalling how, during the twenties and early thirties a few socialists, progressives and liberals repeatedly drew attention to the fact that although the Kaiser had gone, the old Prussian generals remained in key positions in the Weimar Republic. These warnings were ignored or shrugged off, and everyone knows what happened.

Today there are similar warning signals from West Germany. In almost every issue of GERMAN REPORT since its first appearance in January 1952 we have quoted chapter and verse in warning of developments in West Germany; if or when liberal, democratic and socialist papers in the western world take seriously their job of telling their readers what is happening in West Germany, then we shall be glad to devote all our pages to news of peaceful reconstruction in Democratic Germany. But until then we intend to continue our job of documented exposure of nazi infiltration.

And side by side with this, of course, we shall continue to tell you what is going on here in Democratic Germany.

Hopeful Signs.

Incidentally, there have been hopeful signs recently that more and more decent people in West Germany are awakening from their "it can't happen here" attitude. Many trade unionists and Social Democrats, who until recently dismissed reports about renazification as "Communist propaganda" are beginning to wake up to the fact that something very sinister is going on. And we hope to be able to report in the coming weeks and months about more and more such cases.

Meanwhile, what is going on in this respect in the German Democratic Republic? Of course, there is no question here of having to struggle against nazis and war criminals in high places, for there are none. The posts in the cabinet and the administration, which in West Germany are to a large extent occupied by former nazis are mainly occupied in East Germany by former nazi victims, men and women who worked against Hitler in the underground, who fought against fascism in Spain, and who suffered in the concentration camps.

But the people of East Germany feel themselves, as Germans, to be responsible too for what is happening in the western part of their country. That is the reason for the recent great wave of protest in East Germany against the West German renazification policy.

Protest

I saw this very clearly ten days ago at a public meeting called in Berlin by the Association of Resistance Fighters and the Berlin Jewish community. The meeting, to protest against the honours now extended in West Germany to the murderers of the Jews, was called on Sunday morning. Sunday morning is not a very good time to hold a protest meeting, and in addition it was cold unpleasant weather, and rain was pouring down. But when I arrived, ten minutes before the advertised time of commencement, at East Berlin's biggest theatre, where the meeting was held, I found a crowd of many hundreds of people standing in the pouring rain clamouring for admission. Half an hour before the meeting was due to begin the theatre was crammed to the roof, with hundreds of people jammed like sardines in the aisles.

By waving a press card, I finally managed to get into the theatre, and wangled myself a place in the wings of the stage, the only place still unoccupied. It was an inspiring meeting, with an audience which was deathly still as Rabbi Martin Riesenburger recalled the nazi crimes and appealed for the creation of democratic conditions in the whole of Germany, in which all men could live decently.

At the end of the meeting Dr Dieckmann, Chairman of the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic, read a resolution of protest against events in West Germany, and asked the audience to rise as a sign of agreement. The audience rose as one man, and from my vantage point in one corner of the stage I could see something which I thought noteworthy. The stage hands, electricians and firemen behind the scenes, generally rather cynical types who do their jobs and don't worry much about what is going on on the stage, stopped their work and stood quietly too, as a sign that they too had been moved by the meeting and agreed with the protest.

Hitler Back

It was only a question of time, of course, before some official body in West Germany decided to rehabilitate Hitler. Now it has happened at last.

At the beginning of March the city council of the West German harbour town of Kiel held its regular meeting. Just before the meeting ended the Free Democratic Mayor, Dr Muethling, hurriedly read out a statement saying that it had been decided to cancel a resolution passed by the council in December 1945, a few months after the end of the war, since this resolution had been passed "in a juristically incorrect manner".

And what was the 1945 resolution? It was the decision to strike Adolf Hitler and Admiral Raeder, leading nazi war criminal, from the roll of freemen of the city of Kiel. By cancelling this resolution, Hitler and Raeder have been restored to this honour.

Incredible, but true.

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